



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 06824271 2



2023



•



Miss J. H. & Mrs
Englewood
S. Q.
D

10



THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT

By Rev. A. J. Gordon, D. D.



- Adoniram Judson Gordon. A Biography.**
By his son, Ernest B. Gordon. With portraits
and other illustrations. 8vo, cloth \$1.50
- The Ministry of the Spirit.** Introduction by
Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A. 12mo, cloth, gilt top . . 1.00
CHEAP EDITION, 18mo, cloth, net, 25 c.; by post, net .30
- How Christ Came to Church: The Pastor's
Dream. A Spiritual Autobiography.** With the
life-story and the dream as interpreting the man,
by Rev. A. T. Pierson, D. D. With portrait.
8vo., gilt top75
CHEAP EDITION, 18mo, cloth, net 25c.; by post, net .30
- In Christ; or, the Believer's Union with his
Lord.** 12mo, cloth, gilt top, \$1.00; paper . . .35
POCKET EDITION. Long 18mo, cloth 1.00
CHEAP EDITION, 18mo, cloth, net, 25c.; by post, net .30
- The Holy Spirit in Missions.** 12mo, cloth,
gilt top 1.25
- Grace and Glory. Sermons for the Life that
Now is and that which is to Come.** 12mo,
cloth, gilt top, \$1.50; paper net .50
- Ecce Venit; or, Behold He Cometh.** 12mo,
cloth, gilt top, \$1.25; paper net .50
- The Ministry of Healing; or, Miracles of
Cures in all Ages.** With history of the doctrine
from the earliest times. 12mo, cloth, gilt top . . 1.25
Paper net .50
- The Two-Fold Life; or, Christ's Work for
Us, and Christ's Work in Us.** 12mo, cloth,
gilt top, \$1.25; paper net .50
- Risen with Christ; or, the Resurrection of
Christ and of the Believer.** 16mo, boards . . .30
- The First Thing in the World; or the
Primacy of Faith.** 16mo, Popular Vellum Series .20
CHEAP EDITION, net, 10c.; per doz. net 1.00
- The Coronation Hymnal.** 400 Hymns with
Music. By Rev. Drs. A. J. Gordon and A. T.
Pierson. 4to, half-cloth, red edges net .60
Cloth, red edges net .75

Two editions: An edition for general use, and a Baptist edition. Send for specimen pages.

THE
MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT

By A. J. GORDON, D. D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

By REV. F. B. MEYER

MINISTER AT CHRIST CHURCH, LONDON

FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY
NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
Publishers of Evangelical Literature

AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY
1420 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia
BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO ST. LOUIS DALLAS ATL.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
1303 A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
1921 L

Copyright 1894 by the
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY

**TO THE
INHERITORS OF THE SPIRIT**

approach the brazen laver without first having come to the brazen altar, we might expect a rebuking voice to be heard from heaven: "Not yet the washing of water"; and such a saying would signify exactly the same as: "Not yet the Holy Ghost."

Again, when the leper was to be cleansed, observe that the blood was to be put upon the tip of his right ear, the thumb of his right hand, and the great toe of his right foot; and then the oil was to be put upon the right ear, the right thumb, and the right foot—the oil upon the blood of the trespass-offering (Lev. 14). Never, we venture to say, in all the manifold repetitions of this divine ceremony, was this order once inverted, so that the oil was first applied, and then the blood; which means, interpreting type into antitype, that it was impossible that Pentecost could have preceded Calvary, or that the outpouring of the Spirit should have anticipated the shedding of the blood.

Then let us reflect, that not only the order of these two great events of redemption was fixed from the beginning, but their dates were marked in the calendar of typical time. The slaying of the paschal lamb told to generation after generation, though they knew it not, the day of the year and week on which Christ our Passover should be sacrificed for us. The presentation of the wave sheaf before the Lord, "*on the morrow after the Sabbath*"¹ had for long centuries fixed the time of our Lord's resurrection on the first day of the

week. And the command to "count from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering, *seven Sabbaths*,"¹ determined the day of Pentecost as the time of the descent of the Spirit. We sometimes think of the disciples waiting for an indefinite period in that upper room for the fulfillment of the promise of the Father; but the time had been fixed not only with God in eternity, but in the calendar of the Hebrew ritual upon earth. They tarried in prayer for ten days, simply because after the forty days of the Lord's sojourn on earth subsequent to his resurrection, ten days remained of the "seven Sabbaths" period.

To sum up what we are saying: The Spirit of God is the successor of the Son of God in his official ministry on earth. Until Christ's earthly work for his church had been finished, the Spirit's work in this world could not properly begin. The office of the Holy Ghost is to communicate Christ to us—Christ in his entirety. However perfectly the photographer's plate has been prepared, there can be no picture until his subject steps into his place and stands before him. Our Saviour's redemptive work was not completed when he died on the cross, or when he rose from the dead, or even when he ascended from the brow of Olivet. Not until he sat down in his Father's throne, summing up all his ministry in himself,—"*I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore,*"—did the full Christ stand

¹ Lev. 23: 11-16.

ready to be communicated to his church.¹ By the first Adam's sin, God's communion with man through the Holy Ghost was broken, and their union ruptured. When the second Adam came up from his cross and resurrection, and took his place at God's right hand, there was a restoration of this broken fellowship. Very beautiful are the words of our risen Lord as bearing on this point : " I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." ² The place which the divine Son had won for himself in the Father's heart, he had won for us also. All of acceptance and standing and privilege which was now his, was ours too, by redemptive right ; and the Holy Ghost is sent down to confirm and realize to us what he had won for us. Without the expiatory work of Christ for us, the sanctifying work of the Spirit in us were impossible ; and on the other hand, without the work of the Spirit within us, the work of Christ for us were without avail.

" And when the day of Pentecost was fully

¹ " Christ having reached his goal, and not till then, bequeathes to his followers the graces that invested his earthly course ; the ascending Elijah leaves his mantle behind him. It is only an extension of the same principle, that the declared office of the Holy Spirit being to complete the image of Christ in every faithful follower by effecting in this world a spiritual death and resurrection,—a point attested in every epistle,—*the image could not be stamped until the reality had been wholly accomplished ; the Divine Artist could not fitly descend to make the copy before the entire original had been provided.*"—*Archer Butler.*

² *John 20 : 17.* " Because though he and the Father are one, and the Father his Father by the propriety of nature, to us God became a Father through the Son, not by right of nature, but by grace."—*Ambrose.*

come." What these words mean historically, typically, and doctrinally, we are now prepared to see. The true wave sheaf had been presented in the temple on high. Christ the first-fruits, brought from the grave on "the morrow after the Sabbath," or the first day of the week, now stands before God accepted on our behalf; the seven Sabbaths from the resurrection day have been counted, and Pentecost has come. Then suddenly, to those who were "all of one accord in one place," "there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." As the manger of Bethlehem was the cradle of the Son of God, so was the upper room the cradle of the Spirit of God; as the advent of "the Holy Child" was a testimony that God had "visited and redeemed his people," so was the coming of the Holy Ghost. The fact that the Comforter is here, is proof that the Advocate is there in the presence of the Father. Boldly Peter and the other apostles now confront the rulers with their testimony, "Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree . . . Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins; and we are his witnesses of these things; *and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*" As the sound of the golden bells upon the high priest's garments within th

Holiest gave evidence that he was alive, so sound of the Holy Ghost, proceeding from heaven and heard in that upper chamber, was an incontestable witness that the great High Priest whom they had just seen passing through the cloud-curtain, entering within the veil, was still living with them in the presence of the Father. Thus the "*dies natalis*," the birthday of the Holy Spirit, come; and the events of his earthly mission will now be considered in their order.

III

THE NAMING OF THE SPIRIT

light which we get by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Did the risen Christ breathe on his disciples and say to them : "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" ?¹ "It is enough, Lord, that we have received the Spirit from thee," they might well have said. Yet it was not enough for him to give ; for looking on to the day of his enthronement, he says : "But when the Paraclete is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me" (John 15 : 26). When Jesus hath ascended "on high," then can the Holy Ghost communicate "the power from on high." Therefore it is expedient that he go away.

As with the power which Christ was to impart to his church through the Paraclete, so with the righteousness which he was both to impute and to impart ; its highest source must be found in heaven : "And when he, the Comforter, is come, he will convince the world of righteousness ; . . . of righteousness *because I go to my father,* and ye see me no more" (John 16 : 8-10). We may say truly that the righteousness of Christ was not completely finished and authenticated till he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. By his death he perfectly satisfied the claims of a violated law, but this fact was not attested until the grave gave back the certificate of discharge in his released and risen body. By his resurrection

¹ Let it be observed that in this communication of the risen Christ it is not said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"—the article being significantly omitted—λάβετε Πνεῦμα ἁγίου

he was "declared to be the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1 : 4). But the fact was not fully verified till God had "set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named" (Eph. 1 : 20, 21). Now in his consummated glory he is prepared to be "made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" to his people. He who had been "manifest in the flesh" that he might be made sin for us, was now "justified in the Spirit" and "received up into glory," that he might be made righteousness to us, and that "we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Christ's coronation, in a word, is the indispensable condition to our justification. Till he who was made a curse for us is crowned with glory and honor we cannot be assured of our acceptance with the Father.¹ How deep the current of thought which flows through this narrow channel—"Because I go to the Father."

3. The Paraclete teaches only the things of Christ; yet teaches more than Christ taught: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all the truth" (John 16 : 12, 13). It is as though he had said: "I have brought you a little way in the knowledge of my doctrine; he shall bring you all

¹ How righteous must he be, who will go to the Father from the cross and the grave! Thus will the Holy Spirit convince the world that he is a righteous man, and truly righteous of man.—*Revs.*

God gave unto him, to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass." It was because of his going unto the Father that greater works and greater riches were to attend the church after Pentecost. Why may we not assign to the same cause also the fuller revelation of the future and the leading into completer truth concerning the blessed hope of the church? In other words, if we may think of Christ as entering into larger revelation as he returns to the glory which he had with the Father must we not think of larger communications of truth by the blessed Paraclete?

Have we not learned something of the nature and offices of the Spirit by this study of his new name, and of all that the departing Lord says in the wondrous discourse wherein he introduces him to his disciples? At least the study should enable us to distinguish two inspired terms which have been needlessly confounded by not a few writers, viz. : the words "*Paraclete*," and "*Parousia*." The latter word, which constantly occurs in Scripture as describing our Lord's second coming, has been applied in several learned works to the advent of the Holy Spirit; and since Christ came in the person of the Spirit, it has been argued that the Redeemer's promised advent in glory has already taken place. But this is to confuse terms whose use in Scripture marks them as clearly distinct. Observe their difference: In the *Paraclete*, *Christ comes* spiritually and invisibly; in the *Parousia*, *he comes* bodily and gloriously. The advent of the *Paraclete* is really conditioned

the Saviour's personal departure from his people : " If I go not away the Paraclete will not come to you " (John 16 : 7). The Parousia, on the other hand, is only realized in his personal return to his people : " For what is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing ? Are not even ye in the *presence* of our Lord Jesus Christ *at his coming* ? " (1 Thess. 2 : 19). The Paraclete attends the church in the days of her humiliation ; the Parousia introduces the church into the day of her glory. In the Paraclete, Christ came to dwell with the church on earth : " I will not leave you orphans ; I will come to you " (John 14 : 18). In the Parousia, Christ comes to take the church to dwell with himself in glory : " I will come again and receive you unto myself ; that where I am there you may be also " (John 14 : 3). Christ prayed on behalf of his bereaved church for the coming of this Paraclete : " And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Paraclete. " The Holy Spirit now prays with the pilgrim-church for the hastening of the Parousia. " And the Spirit and the bride say, Come " (Rev. 22 : 17). These two can only be understood in their mutual relations. Christ, who gave the new name to the Holy Spirit, can best interpret that name to us by making us acquainted with himself. May that name be for us so real a symbol of personal presence that while strangers and pilgrims in the earth we may walk evermore " in the *paraclesis of the Holy Ghost* " (Acts 9 : 31).

“But now the Holy Ghost is given more perfectly, for he is no longer present by his operation as of old, but is present with us so to speak, and converses with us in a substantial manner. For it was fitting that, as the Son had conversed with us in the body, the Spirit should also come among us in a bodily manner.”—
Gregory Naziansen.

IV

THE EMBODYING OF THE SPIRIT

THE church, which is his body," began its history and development at Pentecost. Believers had been saved, and the influences of the Spirit had been manifested to men in all previous dispensations from Adam to Christ. But now an *ecclesia*, an outgathering, was to be made to constitute the mystical body of Christ, incorporated into him the Head and indwelt by him through the Holy Ghost. The definition which we sometimes hear, that a church is "a voluntary association of believers, united together for the purposes of worship and edification" is most inadequate, not to say incorrect. It is no more true than that hands and feet and eyes and ears are voluntarily united in the human body for the purposes of locomotion and work. The church is formed from within; Christ present by the Holy Ghost, regenerating men by the sovereign action of the Spirit, and organizing them into *himself as the living center*. The Head and the *body are therefore one*, and predestined to the *same history of humiliation and glory*. And ^{as}
62

they are one in fact, so are they one in name. He whom God anointed and filled with the Holy Ghost is called "the Christ," and the church, which is his body and fullness, is also called "the Christ." "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, *so also is the Christ*" (1 Cor. 12 : 12). Here plainly and with wondrous honor the church is named *ὁ Χριστός*, commenting upon which fact Bishop Andrews beautifully says : "Christ is both in heaven and on earth ; as he is called the Head of his church, he is in heaven ; but in respect of his body which is called Christ, he is on earth."

So soon as the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven this great work of his embodying began, and it is to continue until the number of the elect shall be accomplished, or unto the end of the present dispensation. Christ, if we may say it reverently, became mystically a babe again on the day of Pentecost, and the hundred and twenty were his infantile body, as once more through the Holy Ghost he incarnated himself in his flesh. Now he is growing and increasing in his members, and so will he continue to do "till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of fullness of Christ." Then the Christ on earth will be taken up into visible union with the Christ in heaven, and the Head and the body be glorified together.

... church's formation

as recorded in the Acts, harmonizes with the conception given above. The story of Pentecost culminates in the words, "and the same day there were added about three thousand souls" (Acts 2 : 41). Added to whom? we naturally ask. And the King James translators have answered our question by inserting in italics "to them." But not so speaks the Holy Ghost. And when, a few verses further on in the same chapter, we read : "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved," we need to be reminded that the words "to the church" are spurious. All such glosses and interpolations have only tended to mar the sublime teaching of this first chapter of the Holy Spirit's history. "And believers were the more added *to the Lord*" (Acts 5 : 14). "And much people were added *unto the Lord*" (Acts 11 : 24). This is the language of inspiration—Not the mutual union of believers, but their divine co-uniting with Christ ; not voluntary association of Christians, but their sovereign incorporation into the Head and this incorporation effected by the Head through the Holy Ghost.

If we ask concerning the way of admission into this divine *ecclesia*, the teaching of Scripture is explicit : "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12 : 13). The baptism in water marks the formal introduction of the believer into the church ; but this is the symbol, not the *substance*. For observe the identity of form *between the ritual and the spiritual*. "I indeed baptize you in water," . . . said John, "but

twofold manifestation of Christ. "But C thanked, that ye have obeyed from the hea pattern of doctrine to which ye were deliv writes the apostle (Rom. 6 : 17). The patt the context shows, is Christ dead and rise the church truly lives in the Spirit, he wil her so plastic that she will obey this divine as the metal conforms to the die in whic struck. If she yields to the sway of "the that now worketh in the children of disobedi she will be stereotyped according to the fash the world, and they that look upon her will see Christ in her.

V
THE
ENDUEMENT OF THE SPIRIT



THE END

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE END OF THE WORLD

body be preserved entire without blame *at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Thess. 5 : 23, R. V.). The time appointed for the consummation of this blameless wholeness is at the Saviour's advent in glory. And how suggestive the order maintained in naming the threefold man : "Your spirit, soul, and body." Our sanctification moves from within outward. It begins with the spirit, which is the holy of holies ; the Spirit of God acting first on the spirit of man in renewing grace, then upon the soul, till at last it reaches the outer court of the body, at the resurrection and translation. When the body is glorified, then only will sanctification be consummated, for then only will the whole man, spirit, soul, and body, have come under the Spirit's perfecting power.

We may see the difference between progressive sanctification and perfected sanctification, or glorification, by comparing familiar texts. One already has been quoted in this chapter : "We all, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3 : 18). Here are degrees of progress "from glory to glory," and it is a progress in the glorified life—gradual conformity to the Lord of glory, through successive stages of glory, effected by the Spirit of glory. The word-painting of the passage inevitably associates it in our thought with the great transfiguration experience of our Lord, when by a *kind of rapture* he was for a little while taken out of "this present evil age" (Gal. 1 : 4), and trans-

in thy likeness"—the conformity to the Divine image at the instant sound of the resurrection trump (Ps. 17 : 15). Perhaps we may conjecture wherein will consist the perfection of the resurrection state. We may find it in that one saying : " It is raised a spiritual body " (1 Cor. 15 : 44). *Now*, how often the body dominates the spirit, making it do what it would not ; but *then*, the spirit will dominate the body, making it do as it will. In a house divided against itself there can be neither perfection nor peace. Such is the condition in our present state of humiliation. And not the body alone, but the immaterial within us may be at war with the divine. What does the Apostle Jude mean in his description of certain who separated themselves, saying that they are " sensual, having not the Spirit " (Jude 19). The soul, the middle factor in the man, if we may say so, instead of being in alliance with our higher nature, the spirit, takes sides with the lower, the flesh, so that instead of being spiritual we become " earthly, sensual, devilish " (James 3 : 15). The whole man must be presented blameless at the coming of the Lord before we can enter upon a state of blessed perfection. Our spirit must not only rule our soul and our body but both these must be subject to the Holy Spirit of God. Dimly and imperfectly do we thus imagine to ourselves the perfection of our " spiritual body." Now *the body bears the spirit, a slow chariot, whose wheels are often disabled, and whose swiftest motion is but labored and tardy. Then the spirit will be*

body, carrying it as on wings of thought thersoever it will. The Holy Ghost, by his ine inworking will, has completed in us the ine likeness, and perfected over us the Divine union. The human body will now be in sov-ign subjection to the human spirit, and the nan spirit to the divine Spirit, and God will be and in all.

there must be such prayerful sanctifying of the self and such prayerful search of the other, that in reaching decisions in the church there may be the same declaration as in the first Christian council: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts 15 : 28).

In some very profound teaching in 2 Cor. 3 we seem to have a hint as to how we hear the voice of the Lord in guiding the affairs of the church. There the administration (*διακονία*) of the Spirit is distinctly spoken of in contrast to the administration of the law. Its deliverance is written "not with ink, not in tables of stone, but in the tables that are the hearts of flesh, with the Spirit of the living God" (R. V.). There must be a sensitive heart wherein this handwriting may be inscribed; an unhindering will through which he may act. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," it is written in the same passage. Liberty for God to speak and act as he will through us, which begets loyalty; not liberty for us to do as we will, which begets lawlessness.

To us there is something exceedingly suggestive in the teaching of the Lord's post-ascension gospel, the Revelation, on this point. The epistles to the seven churches we hold, with many of our best commentators, to be a prophetic setting of the successive stages of the church's history: its declines and its recoveries, its failures and its *repentances*, from ascension to advent. *because the bride of Christ is perpetually being* *into listening to false teachers and surren-*

to the guidance of evil counsellors, the Lord is constantly admonishing her to heed the voice of her true Teacher and Guide, the Holy Ghost. How forcibly this admonition is introduced into the great Apocalyptic drama! As in the opening of the successive seals, representing the judgments of God upon apostate Christendom, the cry is repeated, "Come!" "Come!" "Come!" "Come!" (Rev. 6)—as though the church under chastisement would repeatedly relearn the advent prayer which her Lord put into her mouth in the beginning: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," so at each stage of the church's backsliding a voice is heard from heaven saying: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." It is the admonition "of him that hath the seven spirits of God," seven times addressed to his church throughout her earthly history, calling her to return from her false guides and misleading teachers, and to listen to the voice of her true Counsellor.

From this general statement of the administration of the Holy Spirit let us now descend to the particular acts and offices in which this authority is exercised.

1. *The Holy Spirit in the ministry and government of the church.* In speaking to the elders of Ephesus Paul says: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock in which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, to feed the church of God" (Acts 20:28, R. V.). Clearly in the beginning bishops or pastors were given by the Spirit of

nomination was made; prayer was offered in which the Lord was asked to indicate which of the candidates he had chosen; and then a vote having been taken, Matthias was declared elected. Is there any indication that this choice was ever ratified by the Lord? On the contrary, Matthias passes into obscurity from this time, his name never again being mentioned. Some two years subsequent, the Lord calls Saul of Tarsus; he is sealed with his Spirit, and certified by such evident credentials of the Divine appointment that he boldly signs himself "Paul, an apostle, *not of men neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father*" (Gal. 1 : 1).

We believe that the apostolic office has passed away, the qualification therefor, that of having been a witness of the Lord's resurrection, being now impossible. But the office of pastor, elder, bishop or teacher of the flock still remains. And the divine plan is that this office should be filled, just as in the beginning, by the appointment of the Holy Ghost. Nor can we doubt that if there is prayerful waiting upon him for guidance, and sanctified submission to his will when it is made known, he will now choose pastors and set them over their appointed flocks just as manifestly as he did in the beginning. Very beautiful is the picture in Revelation of the glorified Lord, moving among the candlesticks. There are "seven golden candlesticks" now, not one only as in the Jewish temple. The Church of God is manifold, not

unit.¹ He who "walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" "holdeth the seven stars in his right hand." These stars are "the angels of the seven churches"—their ministers or bishops as generally understood. The Lord holds them in his right hand. Does he not require us to ask of him alone for their bestowal? Yes. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10 : 2). There is no intimation in Scripture that we are to apply anywhere but to him for the ministry of his church. Does he not give such ministry, and he alone? Yes. "When he ascended on high . . . he gave some . . . Pastors and teachers." And now, speaking to the church in Ephesus, the elders of which, Chosen by the Holy Ghost, Paul had so affectionately exhorted, he is seen in the attitude of Chief-Shepherd and Bishop—giving pastors with his own hand; placing them with his own right hand, and warning the church that though they have tried and rejected false apostles, they have nevertheless left their "first love." Significant word! On this love our Lord conditioned the indwelling of the Father and of the Son through the Holy Spirit (John 14 : 23). Losing this the peril becomes imminent that the candlestick may be removed

¹ By the candlesticks being seven instead of one, as in the tabernacle, we are taught that whereas in the Jewish dispensation, God's visible church was one, in the Gentile dispensation there are many visible churches; and that Christ himself recognizes them alike.—Canon Garratt, "Commentary on the Revelation," p. 32.

statements? That does not prove that they are not reconcilable. The history of solved contradictions has certainly shown this, that as "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men," so the discords of God are more harmonious than men.

We may say, in closing this chapter, that almost the highest proof of the infallibility of Scripture is the practical one, that we have proved it so; that as the coin of the State has always been found able to buy the amount represented on its face, so the prophecies and the promises of Holy Scripture have yielded their face value to those who have taken pains to prove them. If they have not always done so, it is probable that they have not yet matured. Certainly there are multitudes of Christians who have so far proved the veracity of Scripture that they are ready to trust it without reserve in all that it pledges for the world yet unseen and the life yet unrealized. "Believe that thou mayest know," then, is the admonition which Scripture and history combine to enforce. In the farewell of that rare saint, Adolph Monod, these golden words occur: "When I shall enter the invisible world, I do not expect to find things different from what the word of God represented them to me here. The voice I shall then hear will be the same I now hear upon the earth, and I shall say, 'This is indeed what God said to me; and how thankful I am that I did not wait till I had seen in order to believe.' "

IX
THE
CONVICTION OF THE SPIRIT

“The Comforter in every part of his threefold work glorifies Christ. In convincing of sin he convinces us of the sin of not believing on Christ. In convincing us of righteousness, he convinces us of the righteousness of Christ, of that righteousness which was made manifest in Christ going to the Father, and which he received to bestow on all such as should believe in him. And lastly, in convincing of judgment, he convinces us that the Prince of the World was judged in the life and by the death of Christ. Thus throughout, Christ is glorified; and that which the Comforter shows to us relates in all its parts to the life and work of the incarnate Son of God.”—

Julius Charles Hare.

IX

THE CONVICTION OF THE SPIRIT

AND when he is come *he will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment*" (John 16 : 8, R. V.). It is too large a conclusion which many seem to draw from these words, that since the day of Pentecost the Spirit has been universally diffused in the world, touching hearts everywhere, among Christians and heathen, among the evangelized and the unevangelized alike, and awakening in them a sense of sin. Does not our Lord say in this same discourse concerning the Comforter : "*Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not neither knoweth him*" ? (John 14 : 17). With these words should be associated the limitation which Jesus makes in the gift of the Paraclete : "*If I depart I will send him unto you.*" Christ's disciples were to be the recipients and distributors of the Holy Ghost, and his church the mediator between the Spirit and the world. "*And when he is come (to you) he will reprove the world.*" And to complete the exposition, we may connect this promise with the Great Commission

•

•

•

•

•

•

•

•

OCT 24 1938

